

MTF/GLO/345/BMG "CountrySTAT for Sub-Saharan Africa (SSA) – Phase"

UTF/UEM/002/UEM "Appui à la mise en œuvre et au développement du Système CountrySTAT en Guinée-Bissau, au Niger, au Togo et au Siège de la Commission de l'UEMOA"

GTFS/RAF/465/ITA "Strengthening capacity of selected member countries of the East African Community in agricultural statistics for food"

CountrySTAT Consultative Meeting

(Back-to-back with the 23rd Session of AFCAS)

Casablanca, Morocco 01 – 03 December 2013

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS



Benin, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Cameroon, Congo-Brazzaville, Cote-d'Ivoire, Ethiopia, Gambia, Ghana, Guinea-Conakry, Guinea-Bissau, Kenya, Madagascar, Malawi, Mali, Mozambique, Niger, Nigeria, Senegal, Sierra Leone, Tanzania, Togo, Uganda, Zambia, East African Community (EAC), Southern African Development Community (SADC), Union Economique et Monétaire Ouest-Africaine (UEMOA), United Nations of Economic Commission for Africa (UNECA), AfricaFertilizer and FAO

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

From the presentations made by stakeholders, fruitful discussions and the work of three working groups, the meeting provided relevant conclusions and recommendations under the three following components: Statistics; Information Technologies; Communication, Institutional framework, Partnerships and Building Capacity.

STATISTICS

1. Enter CountrySTAT in the dynamics of implementation of national development strategies of Statistics (NSDS) as a space for dialogue and consultation specific to the statistics of agricultural sector and rural areas.
2. Improve data quality through:
 - Implementing tools to check the validity and consistency of data when uploading and updating CountrySTAT.
 - Increase training and information sharing with the different national structures involved in CountrySTAT.
 - Involvement of appropriate people representing data producers in CountrySTAT structures.
 - Making tools available to countries to assist in the improvement of time series data and estimation of missing data.
3. Identification and implementation of synthetic indicators from the Core Module (National Statistics) of CountrySTAT for national and regional levels.
4. CountrySTAT should cover national accounts, particularly the account of agriculture and its satellites, and other data related to agriculture and rural areas.
5. Prepare and disseminate national, international and FAO classifications and correspondence tables with details, descriptions and characteristics taking into account the regional dimension.
6. Take into account current information, particularly those relating to prices, crop forecasting and food security using links to access data or to feed the database CountrySTAT.
7. Provide maps in CountrySTAT related to agriculture and rural areas, and provide user friendly functionality to enable the easy use of the maps to enhance the meaning of the statistical data.
8. Cover specific methodological aspects in accordance with the data available in the country, the reference methods of FAO and the use of innovative information technologies for data collection (tablet, mobile phone, etc.).
9. Implement computerized tools to share and/or generate maps, graphs and statistical tables and to facilitate the management of change of classifications and administrative divisions.

INFORMATION TECHNOLOGIES

10. CountrySTAT should include data management tools:
 - facilitating data conversion between different formats
 - CountrySTAT should provide tools to track the preparatory process of the data
 - CountrySTAT should make available data from different sources (e.g. production data from 2 institutions) and the processing history. Both source and processing history should be indicated in the metadata. History should be automatically kept in CountrySTAT
11. Be able to use CountrySTAT tools selectively, depending on specific user requirements in any step of the data flow from data collection to publication.
12. CountrySTAT should help giving access to data at all levels including census data and other raw information.
13. CountrySTAT should provide aggregation functions for different geographic areas (e.g. ecological zones) and not only on administrative units. Look into possibilities to provide aggregation functions for user-specific zones.
14. Harmonization tools to combine and match different classification systems.
15. A measurement unit converter should be inbuilt in CountrySTAT.
16. Improve on the current data upload and template management.
17. Metadata should be entered while uploading data.
18. Create tools that provide indications on data quality: it should both compare values of different datasets and within the same dataset (important differences should be flagged).
19. Build usage report tools to monitor visits and user preferences; provide access of this tool to the CountrySTAT focal points.
20. Build a dataset rating system that allows users to express appreciation or concern with regard to the data quality, availability, timeliness, etc.
21. Work together with the focal points to define rules to avoid data duplication and inconsistencies in CountrySTAT.
22. Improve data download functions in CountrySTAT.
23. For comparing indicators (one vs. another) and provide analysis of different variables (like cost of production).
24. To compute indicators based on a given methodology.
25. To combine CountrySTAT data (from the CountrySTAT database) with user-data.
26. Expose GIS functionalities in CS for both display and analysis.
27. Include and /or improve tools to manipulate data for analysis (e.g. pivoting, aggregation, querying).
28. Provide tools to facilitate data collection through crowd sourcing approach.
29. Help compliment existing data with the use of satellite images and geo-spatial analysis.

COMMUNICATION, INSTITUTIONAL FRAMEWORK, PARTNERSHIPS AND BUILDING CAPACITY

COMMUNICATIONS :

30. Communication on the availability of data on CountrySTAT must be increased at the national level through:
- Poster, brochures and a computer available at National Trade Fairs for those in attendance to use CountrySTAT. This targets users from private and public sectors.
 - Develop a common publication to be made available in all countries to raise the visibility of CountrySTAT activities and data available.
 - Add Sensitization Seminar for media, just as there is a sensitization seminar for high level officials.
 - Sensitize chiefs of service on CountrySTAT.
 - Have a Communications Officer from the focal institution engaged in the Secretariat and responsible to cover all activities.
 - Engage a group of media specialists who are trained about CountrySTAT, statistical issues at the national level, and can consistently cover activities and provide news stories that can be understood and appreciated by the average citizen.

STRENGTHENING THE INSTITUTIONAL FRAMEWORK:

31. The National Secretariat should lead the effort to collect more specific indicators that support the NSDS.
32. The TWG/GTT should include and prioritize the primary data required to prepare the national Food Balance Sheet.
33. Motivation and support for members of the National Secretariat and TWG/GTT should be included in yearly budgets, and should conform to national guidelines for participation in national committees (Participation Allowances, etc.). This should ideally be included in the Government budget.
34. APIs to highlight data on CountrySTAT from the various ministries involved in TWG/GTT. Increases ownership.
35. TWG/GTT should include in their mandate to ensure clarity on data issues (i.e. increased cotton production which could appear as an outlier).
36. A budget line for Agriculture Statistics (Ag Stats) should be included in the national Agriculture Investment Programme budget, and under the Ag Stats there would be provision to support CountrySTAT.
37. Provide more tools for data analysis.
38. CountrySTAT is included in the work plan for individual TWG/GTT members.

IMPROVING PARTNERSHIP:

39. Hold a forum where all data needs are identified by various stakeholders at the beginning of the new project.
40. Sub-regional consultation of all needs to be able to harmonize and meet needs of those from various institutions. (ECOAGRIS, UEMOA, Countries).

41. Private sector should be included in forum to express their data needs.
42. Investment from Regional Organizations to support national data collection.
43. Increase partnerships to broaden the scope of data collection through data sharing.
44. Partnerships to improve data collection at the local/sub-national level to target indicators where it has been difficult to collect data of good quality/quantity.

IMPROVING CAPACITY DEVELOPMENT:

45. Activities to help increase the understanding of data from the perspective of potential data users (such as nutrient content of fertilizers and pesticides).
46. Develop online communities of practice so that a existing members of the CountrySTAT family can help others on managing TWG/GTT issues, technical issues, data analysis issues, etc.
47. Sharing experiences through study tours, and include members of the TWG.
48. Partnerships that can help supplement training on:
 - Methodologies to improve data collection
 - Improving data analysis
 - Technological innovation (GIS, Spatial Data Analysis)
49. Panorama Reports should be updated regularly.
50. Refresher trainings should have an increased budget to allow for training a broader group of national users.

MAIN FEATURES OF NEW VISION:

51. National Secretariat should lead the effort to collect more specific indicators that support the NSDS.
52. TWG/GTT should include and prioritize the primary data required to prepare the national Food Balance Sheet.
53. Automatic generation of value added reports and analyses, such as Food Balance Sheets aligned with other information sources related to Agriculture Statistics.
54. Regional organizations should take a larger role in providing national technical assistance.

GENERAL

55. Preparation of a concept note on the future vision of CountrySTAT.
56. Preparation of a new project proposal in accordance with the new vision for CountrySTAT.
57. Engage in advocacy towards the existing and new resource partners for financing the new project.
58. Put the new project in the dynamics of the National Strategy of Development of Statistics (NSDS) implementation processes and strengthen the collaboration with partners.
59. Endorsement by the 23rd session of AFCAS of the conclusions and recommendations of the CountrySTAT Consultative Meeting.